



**HEALTHSERVICES**

**PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HSPAC)**

*Multidisciplinary in Approach, Connected by Service, Advancing Public Health*

## **HSPAC Career Development Subcommittee**



### **HSPAC Writing for Impact: Adding KA-POW-erful Language**

--**OBJECTIVE**--

--**IMPACT DEFINED**--

-- Cause and Effect --

-- Common Measures for Impacts --

-- Qualitative and Quantitative Measures --

-- Examples of Writing for Impact --

## OBJECTIVE

The [HSPAC Career Development Subcommittee](#) wants to assist officers in writing powerful statements that capture the impact of their work, which can be incorporated into COER, OS, ROS, CV, award nominations, and other documents.

## IMPACT DEFINED

- Impact statements are the effects of an officer's efforts and highlight why and how that work matters.
- They are the results of hard work, dedication, and perseverance in our mission assignments.

## CAUSE AND EFFECT

Impacts are the results of accomplishments and accomplishments are the achievements or successes of the officer. Launching a new program, providing treatment to patients and completing a research project are all examples of accomplishments. Impacts, on the other hand, are the results of that work. There is a cause (accomplishments) and effect (impact) relationship between these two concepts.

### Looking for Impacts Downstream

Ideally, implementing a project or initiative generates a measurable result that generally leads to a secondary or downstream effect such as saving lives, cost, or time.

**Tip:** When evaluating your work, the farther downstream you can assess and connect to your accomplishments, the more powerful the impact of the project.

### Learn More about Health Literacy and Plain Writing:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/other/plainwriting.html>
- Health Literacy (CDC) [healthliteracy@cdc.gov](mailto:healthliteracy@cdc.gov)
- Clear Communication (CDC) [clearcommunication@cdc.gov](mailto:clearcommunication@cdc.gov)
- View pages 13-14 of the [Winter 2018 USPHS Combined Category Newsletter](#) for recommendations on clear communication in preparation for promotion.

## Common Measures for Impacts

To articulate the value of one's work, an officer must measure the effects of a project, initiative, or program. The impact measures in public health can include lives saved and illness or injury avoided, prevented or mitigated. However, an officer can use varieties of other measures to assess outcomes, effects, and impacts (See Table 1.)

*Table 1: Common Impact Measure Categories*

- Increased/improved behavior of target audience
- Increased accessibility to resources
- Increased efficiency of operations, actions, or interventions
- Improved health equity and decreased health disparities
- Financial savings or cost avoidance
- Decreased staff time or energy savings
- Policy implementation
- Increase in knowledge or awareness

Tip: Comparing before and after the implementation of an activity, intervention, new treatment, process, etc. can measure the impact of the activity. Be sure to think about how you will evaluate your work in advance so that you can measure your baseline in order to compare the results of your work to the original context or situation.

## DIVE INTO THE DETAILS

Impact statements should be as specific as possible. If your project replaced an existing intervention with a new one, you would probably want to know if the new one is better. What would define "better"? Is it a cheaper intervention? Is it more effective? Is it more efficient? You will want to try to answer these questions with evidence of effect, such as how much cheaper is the new program from the old? How much time was saved by the new intervention?

## QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE MEASURES

Supporting your impact statements with numbers, percentages, or other values provides specificity and can provide good evidence that your work is making a difference. Avoid, whenever possible, the use of vague, qualifying words such as: some, many, and few, since these are relativity terms and do not anchor the statement to a concrete value.

**Vague impact statement:** After LCDR Doe launched a new program, local clinicians provided many people with treatment for parasites.

**KA-POWERful impact statement:** After LCDR Doe launched a new program, a cadre of nine local clinicians increased their ability to provide treatment for parasitic infections per day by over 50% from 400 to 823 patients over a 30 day period.

## EXAMPLES OF WRITING FOR IMPACT:

Impact Measure	Accomplishment Examples	Impact Examples
Increased/improved behavior of target audience	LCDR Doe provided a new clinical treatment to local patients.	The need for secondary follow up care visits was reduced by 18%. [clinical]
	LCDR Doe provided eight educational seminars at local community centers.	Use of bicycle helmets by children increased by 10% in local communities.
Increased accessibility to resources	LCDR Doe redesigned the division's website to increase utility and ease of use.	Within 6 months the number of downloaded fact sheets and guidance documents increased by 32%.
Increase efficiency of operations, actions, or interventions	LCDR Doe developed a SharePoint page for routing documents for review and approval.	Documents submitted through SharePoint for review were approved 33% faster than those circulated in hard copy.
	LCDR Doe established an SOP for labeling clinical lab samples.	Sample labeling errors were reduced by 10%. [clinical]
Financial savings or cost avoidance	LCDR Doe initiated the use of distance learning technologies for training field staff.	Virtual training opportunities avoided \$1500 in travel expenses per staff member for each 8hour training.
Staff time or energy savings	LCDR Doe created a new SOP and mobile electronic system for collecting data while on site visits.	The mobile data collection system reduced the time for data entry by 175% and analysis by 20%.
Policy implementation	LCDR Doe established a handbook and SOP for PAG operations.	The PAG awards subcommittee was able to reduce the entire awards review process from 28 to 15 days. [officership]
Increase in knowledge or awareness	LCDR Doe conducted a training on conducting field assessments.	Trainees demonstrated a 45% increase in understanding of training concepts between the pre- and post-tests.
	LCDR Doe wrote 3 articles printed in <i>The Signal</i> newsletter.	Information from the articles was cited in three peer-reviewed journals. [officership]